



The Servants' Light

April 26, 2017

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***"Servants of
Jesus Christ—
Ministering
To One Another,
To Our Community,
And To Our World."***

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Sunday Morning

Schedule

Worship—

9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Children's Worship—

9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Coffee Fellowship—

10:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Nursery/Preschool Care—

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.



A Ladies' Day Retreat

Saturday, May 13

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Let us go off to a quiet place and get rest — Mark 6:31

Ladies, this is a special day set aside just for you to unwind and relax, to meet some new friends, and to take time to grow stronger in God's Word.

The \$10 per person cost includes a light breakfast, a Panera lunch, enriching workshops, a special gift, worship, and a spiritual message from Mary Lynn Keir.

You may choose up to 3 of the following break-out workshops:

- * Healthy Weight Management—5 Proven Strategies from a Registered Dietitian. Trying to maintain or lose weight? Learn how to make better food choices with 5 tips to becoming a healthier YOU!
- * Perk Up Your Wardrobe—Stylish tips for accessorizing your Spring and Summer wardrobe responsibly and on a budget using the Fair Trade products of Trades of Hope, while empowering women out of poverty around the world.
- * Recharging Smoothies and Salads—Learn how to incorporate healthy probiotic rich foods into delicious smoothies; easy homemade salad dressing recipes demonstrated; Drover's produce for purchase (samples and recipes provided).
- * "You Can Do It" Floral Arrangement Techniques for Amateurs—Simple techniques will be demonstrated for silk and fresh floral arrangements.
- * Introduction to Handbells—Discover the joy of making music as part of a group in a fun and relaxed atmosphere; no experience needed.
- * Meditation/Chair Yoga—Relax, come to a quiet place within, hear God's voice, and let him Refresh and Recharge your whole being.
- * "Best Face Forward" Skin Care Q & A—Tips on better skin care.
- * "Goodbye Stress" Creative Coloring—A highly recommended way to decompress. Create your own beautiful bookmark
- * Chair Massage—Techniques to adjust shoulder and neck tension demonstrated. We'll practice on a partner, with Licensed Massage Therapist supervision.

Registration is online through May 7. Or you may register on Sunday mornings. Childcare is available upon advance request. Scholarships available.

The Pastor's Corner—

Craig Herr, Senior Pastor



SUNDAY, APRIL 30. We are in the Easter Season and God is at work in our world and in us. Worship with us as together we seek the presence, grace, and hope of the Risen Christ this Sunday. The Chancel Choir is singing at the 9 a.m. worship service. The Worship Band is playing and singing at the 10:30 a.m. worship service. We will celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism at the 9:00 a.m. service this Sunday.

THE UNSELFISH CHURCH, Dispelling Cultural Opinion: Possibilities for Life in the Parables of Jesus. We've started a new Sermon Series, "The Unselfish Church." Our society is questioning the value and usefulness of the Church in today's world. We hear that the Church is unnecessary and that religion contributes to selfishness, violence, and discord in society. But here's the truth the Culture doesn't tell you—The Church is a transforming force for good in our world. Join us to think about the difference Jesus makes in us, in the church, and in the world. See you this Sunday.

SERMON. This Sunday I am preaching on "What God Does and We Can Do." The scripture text is Mark 4:26-29. This is Jesus' Parable of the Growing Seed. We may not always notice or see what God is doing.

But here, Jesus encourages us that God is active and at work in our world.

VIDEO PROJECTION MINISTRY. We need some more volunteers in the video projection room for Sunday Worship. The hymns, songs, sermon slides and video clips add an essential visual element to our worship of God. If you would like to volunteer once a month in the Video Room for Sunday services, just give me a call or e-mail (craig.herr@firstpresjoliet.org). It's a wonderful way to serve, and we have excellent volunteers who will easily provide the training you need to get on board.

COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL and MATSIKO CHILDREN. We are planning a Compassion International Sunday for May 14. Please send me (or the office) a picture of the child you are supporting and their name. We'd like to share the Good News of all the children our members and friends are supporting each year. Some of our members are supporting a child from the Matsiko World Orphan Choir. If so, we'd like to see those children's pictures as well.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig".



Known to be in the Hospital: No one.

April 23, 2017

Worship Attendance — 224

Stewardship Report

2017-2018 Budget: \$ 792,000

Year to Date Receipts	\$33,764
Year to Date Expenses	\$35,603

2017-2018 Bequest/Gift Income Received — \$0

We offer several convenient options for electronic giving. Please visit our website or call Tracy Norris for more information.

Sermon Series —
"The Unselfish Church, Dispelling
Cultural Opinion: Possibilities for Life
in the Parables of Jesus"

We are continuing the sermon series which began after Easter. Society is questioning the value and usefulness of the Church in today's world. We hear that the Church is unnecessary and that religion contributes to selfishness, violence, and discord in society. The truth the Culture doesn't tell you. The Church is a transforming force for good in our world. Join us to think about the difference Jesus makes in us, in the church, and in the world.

May 7—"Grace Wins!"
The Parable of the Lost Son, Luke 15:11-32

May 14—"Opportunities Missed"
The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus
Luke 16:19-31

May 21—"Transform Your Pain"
The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
Matthew 18:21-35

New Members Class

If you would like to know more about the life, ministry, and mission of First Pres. and widen the circle of people who you know, then join us for our New Members Class. If you would like to become a member of the church you are most welcome. If you just want to learn more about the church, that's great too!

We will meet on Sunday, May 21 @ 11:45 a.m. in the Fireside Room. We will have lunch and spend two hours together getting to know each other and talking about First Pres.



Just go to our website — www.firstpresjoliet.org — and at the top of the home page click on "Media" — "Sermons." It's that easy!

Adult Education Opportunities

"Bible Perspectives"
Sundays, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m.
Room 201 with Jim Mullins

We use the Common Lectionary Bible passages each week. Jim Mullins leads the exploration of what the words meant to past hearers and what they mean today to present hearers.

Tuesday Adult Discussion Group

After a short break, we start back on Tuesday, May 2, at 12 noon in the Fireside Room. We will start looking at the Parables of Jesus beginning with a look at what these parables are and why they were used by Jesus. So, bring your lunch on Tuesday, May 2, at noon and join in on the discussion.

Men's Discussion Group Continues

ALL MEN ARE INVITED!! At the conclusion of "Creed," the men attending expressed a desire to continue, so we will. Beginning on Thursday, May 4, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in Room 217, the Men's Discussion Group will continue by taking on some of those tough questions we face for those who call themselves followers of Jesus Christ. This Men's Discussion Group will be patterned on the following idea going forward..."1 Hour in 168"...each of us gets 168 hours in a week to fill as we like. All men are invited to come for 1 hour and discuss questions like: "What makes you so sure God exists—especially when you can't see, hear or touch him?" "Didn't evolution put God out of a job? Why rely on religion in an age of science and knowledge?" "How could a good God allow so much evil, pain and suffering - or does he simply not care?"

1st Pres. Blog

Our 1st Pres. Blog continues, following the lectionary passages. Join us as we continue our journey in the word: <https://firstpresjoliet.wordpress.com>.

Guide Book & Directory

It's time for us to update our database with changes, additions, or deletions that may have occurred in your family over the past year.

Please let us know now of any changes—new phone number, new address, children who are now on their own, etc., so that the information in the new Guide Book & Directory is correct.

If you own or manage a business and would like to find out about advertising in our Guide Book, please call the church office.

Kayaking For Fun

If you like kayaking and would like to go with others on the lakes and streams close by, just let me know. Please e-mail me at craig.herr@firstpresjoliet.org

And please let me know if you have a kayak or two and/or if you want to rent kayaks. I've been out now about 8-9 times, and it's been great getting on the water close by. It's a lot of fun to be on the water enjoying the beautiful weather and seeing all of ducks, geese, birds, river otters, etc.

So, just get in touch with me and we can plan to go kayaking soon.

Pastor Craig



Armed Forces Weekend Commemoration WW II Battle Reenactment

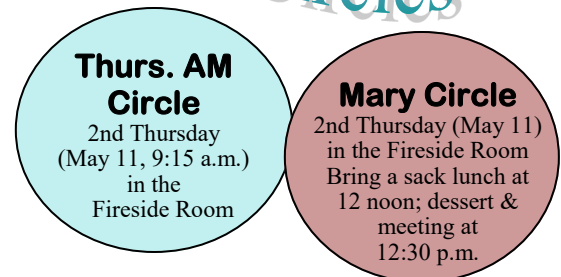
See history come to life with events such as vintage WWII aircraft flyovers, hundreds of uniformed reenactors, vintage WWII tanks, jeeps, and motorcycles, period style USO Show, plus lots of activities for all ages; food and beverages available. Adults \$10, Children 7-12 \$5, 6 and under free. Stronghold is our Presbytery's Camp & Retreat Center located at 1922 Illinois Route 2 North, Oregon, Illinois. Visit www.strongholdcenter.org for the full list of events!

Session Notes

At its regularly scheduled meeting of April 20, 2017, the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, voted:

- approve the baptisms of Nora Thompson, Emersyn Palmer, Noah Johnson and Jack Kessling, and any other baptisms that may be requested;
- to approve the 2017-2018 Budget, in the amount of \$792,000;
- to approve hosting a marriage assessment and improvement simulcast, including featured speakers Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott, possibly on September 29th or some other convenient date and time, at a cost of \$319;
- to approve a second annual summer meal program, in partnership with Pershing Elementary School, with meals provided to students during the summer holiday Monday through Friday between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

PW Circles



Men's Breakfast—May 5, 7:30 a.m. at the Old Fashioned Pancake House on Jefferson St., Joliet.

Dinner Out Group—May 16, 6 p.m. at P J Mulligans (Prairie Bluff Golf Club), 19433 Renwick Rd., Lockport. Call Jean or Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616 to make a reservation.

Men's Dinner Group—May 26, 6 p.m., at Katie O'Connor Pint House, 13717 S. Route 30, Suite 101, Plainfield. RSVP to Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616.

Servants of Jesus Christ —

Ministering to One Another, to Our Community, and to Our World



Stephen Ministry New Training Class

We are looking to move forward and grow our Ministry Team. Stephen Ministers are laypeople—Christian men and women—trained to provide one-to-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, relocation, or separation due to military deployment. A new training class will begin in the Fall. We are looking for both men and women who feel God's calling to give distinctively Christian care through this ministry. If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister, contact Kris Hayden, First Pres. Stephen Leader, @ 815-727-9259, Ext. 209 or stephenministry@firstpresjoliet.org.

Celebrating
150 years

With 150 Loving Acts of Service!

Watch for opportunities coming soon to help build a Habitat for Humanity house this spring and summer.

In honor of our 150th Anniversary this year, we are committing to 150 loving acts of service *beyond the walls of our church*. If you rake leaves for an elderly neighbor, take a meal to a sick co-worker, drive a neighbor to a doctor appointment, give clothes to a needy family, volunteer at Hospice or a local hospital, etc., fill out a block with the details and add it to our collection of blocks. **Remember, if you are part of a church-sponsored project, the church creates one block; if you serve as an individual, you create one block.**



The Night Deacons are serving breakfast on Saturday, May 6, 8 to 10 a.m. to those in our community who are spiritually or physically hungry. Come on out and help us serve and welcome our guests.

Coming This Summer—
Free Summer Lunch
Program
June 5 to August 18
Monday through Friday,
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Children Kindergarten through 12th Grade will be served a FREE nutritious boxed lunch. Transportation to and from First Pres. is NOT provided. This program is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and administered by the Illinois State Board of Education.

The meals come boxed; volunteers are needed to help distribute the lunches and help the children open their lunches. Call Barb Rodgers at 815-439-3747 to offer your help.



Please consider sharing your musical talents at a worship service this summer. Soloists, small vocal groups and instrumentalists are all welcome.

Dates available are: June 4, 11 & 25
July 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

Just call the office to schedule a date. Share your talents and help enhance our worship with the gift of music this summer!

Children's Ministry Update



Summer, Summer, Summer!—That blissful time of the year when the kids are out of school, people take vacations, and lots of things happen that keep us busy, busy, busy.

If you can understand what I am talking about, you might suffer from Summeritis – an affliction that creeps in around this time of the year and somehow manages to mess with our habits, with the way we do things, etc.

Yet none of these come even close to the way Summeritis affects our church life. During the summer time, we tend to see each other less, and be in worship a few Sundays less than usual. Of course, I understand why and trust me, there will be some days this summer I would rather be fishing, or visiting with my friends in Michigan than hanging around Joliet.

I want to encourage you to enjoy your summer vacation, to spend as much time with your family as you can, and still stay connected with your faith family. That connection is one that I personally cherish, in part because it helps me to stay grounded in my faith, helps me see the good in people, and helps me step outside myself and serve those around me. While summer is a great time to take a vacation, summer is also a great time to get closer to God's heart, to God's vision for you. Sunday will always be Sunday with worship and sermons ready for you, Saturday Breakfast will always be ready to be served to those in need, Vacation Bible School will open to 150 kids or so as it did in the past, and your friends will still be here looking to connect. I want to encourage you to take advantage of summer looking through these lenses: I have more time to be closer to God.

My prayer is that we indeed get closer to God, and as a community can grow closer to each other serving and ministering to all around us; and I am hopeful to see what God can do when we all step out in faith making this summer the best summer of our lives as a faith family.

Blessings,
Bo



15 Minutes with Ed Council

Our next "15 Minutes with Ed Council" will be on May 21, 10:10 to 10:25 a.m., when we'll talk about digital content—what does your child/teen consume on a daily basis.

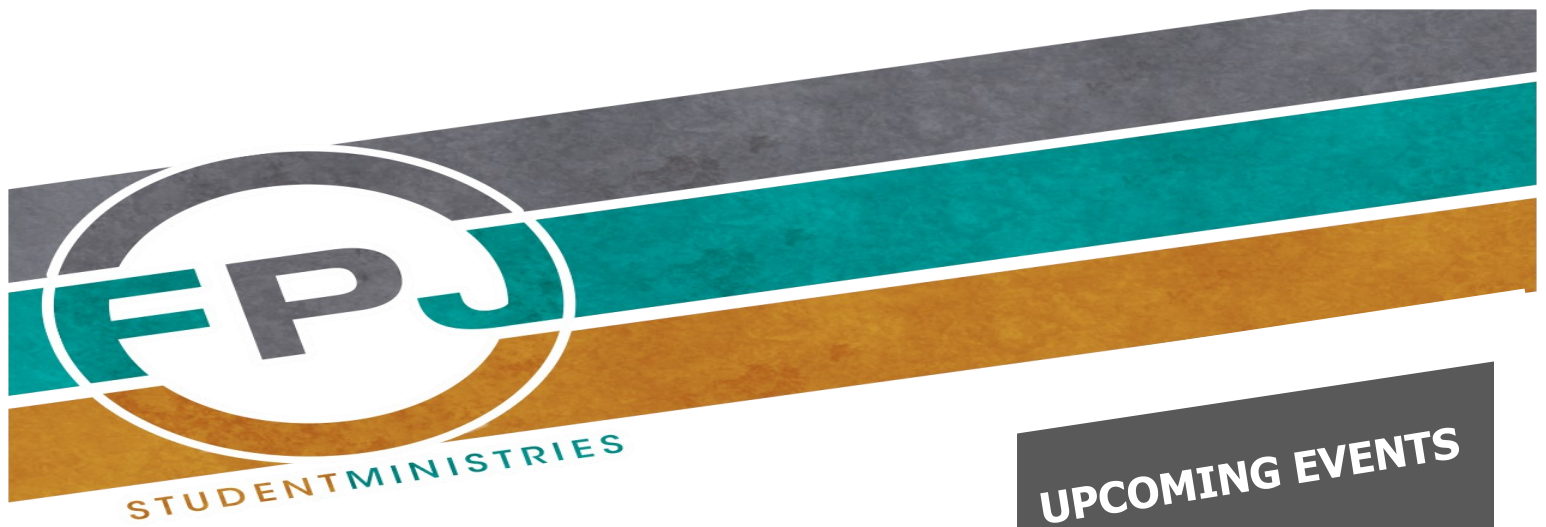
We believe that teaching children and helping them discover their faith is part of our Christian call as a church. And we recognize that when church and family work closely together, we are more likely to have a bigger impact. So....Ed Council invites all parents to come join us on May 21st.

VBS !!!!!!!!



At Maker Fun Factory VBS, kids discover not only that God made them the way they are, but for a purpose, too. Maker Fun Factory is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Sciency-Fun Gizmos™, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. So mark these dates on your calendar: June 19-23. The fun starts at 9:00 a.m. and runs until 12:15 p.m.

Please go to jolietvbs.org to register your children and to volunteer for this life-changing adventure!



Before I start I would just like to share the outcome of the Palm Sunday Breakfast. Between donations and the raffle, we were able to raise \$2,200 for the Youth Group's Mission trip to Leech Lake, Minnesota. I would also like to take this time to thank the youth for taking the time to help with this event, as well as everyone who helped prepare the food, set up decorations and those who donated. A thank you also goes out to the congregation, whose generosity must be commended. Lastly I would like to congratulate our raffle winners: Jan Weber, Carla DeYoung, Mary Caisley and Emma Sticklen.

As summer approaches, the mission trip draws ever closer and it has led me to start thinking about what sort of mission will be done and what impact it might leave on the kids. Based on the mission trips I have been on with other churches in the past, most of the time when you hear about the trip from the kids when they return, it's mostly about the fun they had with their friends, the games they played, and generally one story that becomes a legend amongst the youth group. However, if you ask them what they remember about the trip once they have finished high school and are back home for a visit, you will probably get a very different answer. For example, the kids who go on the trip this year when they return, might not mention the church programs they helped at, the work they did to improve the land on the Indian reservation or the people they formed bonds with. However, when asked later on about what the trip was like, these moments of service are more likely to come up. That is the interesting thing about the passage of time: it really brings out what was important. What seemed like a big event in the timeline of the trip eventually reveals itself to be a small forgotten incident, and what was a small moment with an impoverished child can reveal itself to be the moment that was the turning point for one of the kids to go into mission work.

Sometimes it's easy to see the mission trip as a week for the youth to go on a trip and goof around with their friends. In some respects this is true; the mission trip is a time for fellowship and fun, but also a time for some real work. At that age kids are going to remember the fun and fellowship and see the work as a means to an end to reach this point. However, the bonds they make with fellow church members and other people will last much longer than the echoes of the stories they remember the day they get back.

— Will Ward
will.ward@firstpresjoli.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jr./Sr. High Sunday School—

Meets every Sunday in May
except Mother's Day, May 14

Jr./Sr. High Youth Group—

Meets every Sunday in May
except Mother's Day, May 14
& Memorial Day Weekend,
May 28



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Craig M. Herr—Senior Pastor

Dale Ambler—Associate Pastor

Bo Mircea—Associate Pastor of Children's Ministry
and Family Ministry

Will Ward—Director of Youth Ministry

Diane Uden—Administrative Ministry Assistant

Sherry Buffington—Outreach Ministry Assistant &
Newsletter Editor

Address Service

First Presbyterian Church
805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

Newsletter Deadline—The deadline for reserving space in the May 31 *Servants' Light* is **May 10**. Please e-mail to sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org.

TO:

Guest? Visitor? Is There a Difference?

Tari and I were visiting Brian and Kelly last November. On Saturday evening I was looking at the websites of various churches in the area—Methodist, Episcopal, non-denominational...as it happens, we landed on a Presbyterian Church based on their website and “welcoming” appearance. They claimed “come for worship—stay for friendship.” Service on Sunday started at 10:30 so we arrived a little early to have a look around...large parking lot, newer looking traditional style church building. We were met at the door by a greeter who said “hello” and held the door for us. We entered into their fellowship hall area and started looking around...2 minutes...5 minutes...10 minutes...15 minutes...time for service to start. The individuals passing out bulletins said “good morning” as we received our bulletin. We made our way to a pew about half way to the front. If I were to guess, there were about 100-150 people in worship that day.

The service was good...leaning toward traditional yet casual—choir, teenage handbell choir, lots of kids at the children's message. Good sermon by the pastor. The family sitting in the pew ahead of us had their teenage daughter playing in the handbell choir, so Tari attempted a conversation with the girl as we were waiting to exit the sanctuary at the end of the service, telling her how she enjoyed her music and that she played in the handbell choir at her church...the girl thanked Tari for the compliment, but there was no attempt at conversation by her parents at all. We talked cordially with the pastor who greeted us at the doors leading out of the sanctuary and we left.

So, let me ask you...were Tari and I visitors or guests at this particular church? I would say to you that there is a very distinct difference between the two. Every time First Pres. opens its doors for worship or any other event, if the statistics are correct and I believe they are, we get 10 minutes...10 minutes to make a warm, welcoming and authentic impression on anyone who comes through our doors, or they are highly likely not to return. Every person inside is a HOST to those coming through our doors and how we respond will determine whether they feel like a visitor or a guest...there is a difference!

—Pastor Dale